

A Publication of Providence Farm & C.S.A., (Community Supported Agriculture),



# Growing Weekly



Issue 17, Week of October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009

## Who are we?

Ryan & Andrea  
Romeyn of Providence  
Farm and C.S.A.

## What are we doing?

Growing over 70 varieties of vegetables as well as melons, some herbs, flowers, and pork on our farm overlooking the north end of Torch Lake. We grow our food in a sustainable manner, focusing on the health of our soils and avoiding all synthetic chemicals.

## Our Mission:

To grow wonderful food: full of flavor, nutrition and life, while developing a healthy way of living that is in harmony with our growing family, our community, and the environment.

## How can you learn more about Providence Farm?

Go to our website:

[Csafarms.org/  
providencefarm.asp](http://Csafarms.org/providencefarm.asp)

E-mail: [providencecsa@yahoo.com](mailto:providencecsa@yahoo.com)

Or call:

231-599-2020

Located 1 mile east of  
Eastport on M-88.

## Dear Members,

Ryan, Winter, Isaiah, Maia, Jacob and I would like to welcome you to our first party for shareholders on October 24th, from 4-7: pm. Come rain or shine, we are intending to gather, whether it's in the barn or for an outdoor picnic around the bonfire. We'll be comfortable as long as we dress for the weather!

We'll offer tractor-drawn hay rides, fresh-pressed apple cider and smoked Providence ham for the potluck! Live music will be there also, thanks to our friends from the band, The Boyne River Remedy.

Please bring a generous dish to share, your own table service and chairs, or a blanket for a picnic.

### We look forward to seeing you!

(P.S. Next week is the last week of our c.s.a. **Please return boxes** and bring your own bags/box for the last pick-up to Boyne City, Charlevoix, Traverse City and E. Jordan.)

## What's New This Week?

Pie Pumpkin (Yes, you can make a pie from its very sweet flesh), Parsnips, (Look like pale carrots), Rapini/also known as Broccoli Raab, (an intriguing green), Brussels Sprouts & Rutabaga!

What Else is in Your Box? Broccoli or Cauliflower, Leeks, Potatoes, Carrots,

Parsley, Winter Squash, Onions, Eggplant, Kale, Green & Purple Sweet Peppers

**Please note:** As you may have already noticed some things may be in your box that are not listed, and some listed things may not be in your box. Guesswork is involved when we write the newsletter at the beginning of the week!



Whatscookingamerica.net supplied me with the information about **Broccoli Raab [rob] or Rapini [rah-PEE-nee]** – Commonly known in the United States as broccoli raab (also spelled broccoli rabe). It is truly a vegetable with many names around the world. A few of the many names are raab, rapa, rapine, rappi, rappone, fall and spring raab, turnip broccoli, taitcat, Italian or Chinese broccoli, broccoli rape, broccoli de rabe, Italian turnip, and turnip broccoli.

The photo above is courtesy of Marquita Farm.

Originating in the Mediterranean and also China, it is actually a descendant from a wild herb. Today, Rapini is found growing in California, Arizona, New Jersey, Quebec and Ontario. (And at Providence Farm and C.S.A.!) It is one of the most popular vegetables among the Chinese. It is probably the most popular vegetable in Hong Kong and also widely used in the western world.

Although it has broccoli's name, broccoli raab is not related to broccoli. It is, however, closely related to turnips which is probably why the leaves look like turnip greens. Lots of broccoli-like buds appear here and there but a head never forms. It is grown as much for its long-standing, tasty mustard-like tops as for their multiple small florets with clusters of broccoli-like buds. Good-quality broccoli raab will have bright-green leaves that are crisp, upright, and not wilted.

Used extensively in Italian and Chinese cooking, it is not as popular in the United States but is gaining popularity. The stems are generally uniform in size (hence cook evenly) and need not be peeled. Clean it as you would other greens, removing the bottom portion of the stems which appear tough (sometimes the stems are tougher than other times depending on the age of the rapini). They stems

can be removed up to where the leaves begin, and sautéed before adding the leaves to the pan. This vegetable is a source of vitamins A, C, and K, as well as potassium. Rapini is available all year long, but its peak season is from fall to spring. To maintain crispness, refrigerate, unwashed, loosely wrapped in a plastic bag or wrap for up to 3 days.

### How To Cook Broccoli Raab/Rapini

The leaves, stems, and flower heads are cooked (broil, stir-fry, braise, sauté, or steam) and eaten just like regular broccoli and have a flavor similar to broccoli but much more pungent. In spite of its uniqueness, broccoli raab is considered an acquired taste - but once acquired, it's addictive! Preparing it is very easy:

Rinse and trim 1/4-inch from bottom of stems.

Cut stalks crosswise into 2-inch pieces and drop them into salted (optional), boiling water.

Cook for 1 to 2 minutes and remove with slotted spoon.

Saute the blanched broccoli raab/rapini in a little olive oil and as much garlic as you like for 3 to 5 minutes until tender. Optional - Add a few dried red pepper flakes.



**Andrea:** "What's a "rutabaga" again?" **Ryan:** "What's a rutabaga?! *Come on, you're married to a farmer.*" (All I can envision is celeriac for some reason. I realize that we've probably had it at least once a year for the past eight years. It's just not in my mental filing cabinet. Ask me about chocolate... Anyway, I mentioned this exchange to my usually mild mannered dad and he said, "Rutabaga?! I hate rutabaga! We didn't raise you on *that stuff*. I wouldn't cross the street for a rutabaga. In fact, I'd run the other way." Hmm... mystery solved.)

But I know the above opinion won't dissuade our **enlightened shareholders** from trying it and giving me a few fabulous recipes to boot! I found this info at a the website [www.veggparadise.com](http://www.veggparadise.com):

#### **RUTABAGAS--AN UNCOMMON TREAT:**

Rutabagas are often thought of as yellow turnips but actually bear the botanical name *Brassica napus* and belong to the highly prized family of cruciferous vegetables. The rutabaga, a relatively newcomer in the world of vegetables, is thought to have evolved from a cross between a wild cabbage and a turnip. Because rutabagas thrive best in colder climates, they became popular in Scandinavia, but especially in Sweden, the country that earned them the name "swedes." In Europe, rutabagas are still called swedes. In America, rutabagas were first cultivated in the northern parts of the country in the early 1800s. Canada and the northern states are today's greatest producers of the rutabaga. The rutabaga is a root vegetable that looks very much like a turnip with yellow-orange flesh and ridges at its neck. Although this beta carotene-rich vegetable has been grown and marketed in our country for nearly 200 years, it remains an uncommon food in American dining. It's actually a great tasting vegetable with a delicate sweetness and flavor that hints of the light freshness of cabbage and turnip. With its easy preparation and versatility, great nutrition, and excellent flavor, the rutabaga can easily become an endearing family favorite. Rutabagas store so well, up to one month in the refrigerator and up to four months in commercial storage at 32 degrees.

There are at least 100 ways to enjoy rutabagas. Here are a just few suggestions to introduce this wonderful vegetable:

**RAW:** First, peel them with a vegetable peeler. Slice and enjoy as a snack. Chop, dice, or grate them and add to salads. Create a unique salad with diced rutabagas and other vegetables of your choice. Grate them and add to coleslaw. Grate and combine with carrot salad.

**COOKED:** Rutabagas can be roasted, boiled, steamed, stir-fried, mashed, or stewed. Cook them with potatoes and mash together. Quarter them and roast along with potatoes. Enhance the flavor of stews with chopped or quartered rutabagas. Dice them and add to soups. Stir-fry with onions.

Today's busy lifestyle often makes us seek out healthy recipes that fall into that easy-to-prepare category. Here's a rutabaga winner.

#### **RUTABAGAS IN THE ROUGH**

**Ingredients:** 4 large rutabagas, 1/4 t. salt, Water, 1 T. extra-virgin olive oil, Dash of nutmeg, Salt and pepper to taste

#### **Directions:**

Peel rutabagas with a vegetable peeler, and cut into chunks. Put them into a 4-quart (4 liter) saucepan, add the salt and about 2" (5 cm) of water to cover. Cover saucepan, and bring to a boil over high heat.

Turn heat down to medium and cook about 12 - 15 minutes, or until fork tender. Drain, reserving cooking liquid. Using a potato masher, coarsely mash rutabagas in the saucepan, adding cooking liquid as needed for moisture.

Add olive oil and nutmeg. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer to a serving bowl, sprinkle with a dash of nutmeg, and garnish with a sprig of fresh sage or herb of your choice. Serves 6.